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REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Polish Naval Air
Training and Operations

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1. **FLIGHT TRAINING:** The pilots in the Polish Naval Air Division received their flight training at the Polish Air Force Officer's School, the Polish Navy not having a flight school of its own. All of the students at this school had volunteered to join the Polish Air Force and all were given the same training. While in training each student expressed his preference as to the type of aircraft he desired to fly, but was not always assigned to the type of his choice. After assignments to type had been made, the students trained solely to fly that type of aircraft. Upon completion of flight training all pilots were commissioned and a varying number of them were transferred to the Naval Air Division. The new pilots were not given any choice as to which service they desired. During 1951 and 1952, about twenty of these recently commissioned pilots joined the Division.

Prior to 1951, the length of the course in flight school was nine months, but beginning with the class which graduated in 1951, the course was cut to seven months. The graduates of the longer course were fully competent to fly their assigned type of aircraft. However, when the graduates of the shorter course arrived for duty with the Division, they were not able to solo competently and it was one of the duties of the squadron commanders and of source, to train these new pilots. It was customary for new pilots to make three flights accompanied by an experienced pilot before soloing in a squadron aircraft. These new pilots who could not learn to fly to the satisfaction of the squadron and regimental commanders were either sent back to flight school for more training, assigned to duty not involving flying or released from the service. Pilots who could not accustom themselves

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to flying over the Baltic Sea were usually transferred into the Polish Air Force. During 1951-52, three new pilots who could not learn to fly satisfactorily were transferred to non-flying duties.

2. TRAINING IN THE POLISH NAVAL AIR DIVISION: The Division was in continuous training during [redacted] 25X1
- During the winter months, flying personnel were engaged largely in class room work and flights were made about once each week. During the summer, two or three days each week were spent in flying and the other days in class work. The schedule was governed by weather conditions. A typical schedule for a week of training during the summer is as follows:

Monday - 0800-1200, 1400-1800 - Prepared and tested aircraft.

Tuesday - 0500-1200, 1400-2100 - Flight time.

Wednesday - 0800-1200, 1400-1800 - Prepared and tested aircraft.

Thursday - 0500-1200, 1400-2100 - Flight time.

Friday - 0800-1200, 1400-1800 - Class room work.

Saturday - 0800-1400 - Class work.

During the time spent in class work, pilots and navigators were given instruction in the following subjects:

Flight navigation - 40 hours.

Naval orientation, ship recognition - 10 hours.

Theory of close ground support, mining operations and coastal defense - 10 hours.

Theory of flight - 40 hours.

Meteorology - 20 hours.

Close order drill, manual of arms, small arms firing practice - 20 hours.

Aircraft instruments - 20 hours.

Aerodynamics and aeronautical engineering - 40 hours.

Physical education - 120 hours.

Operation and maintenance of all organic weapons, including bombs and rockets - 10 hours.

Political instruction - 144 hours.

Personal hygiene - 20 hours.

Orders and instructions from higher headquarters, accident prevention training - 50 hours.

Communication procedures - 30 hours.

Use of codes - 30 hours.

Flight tactics - 100 hours.

The number of hours spent on each subject is the total for one year of training.

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In addition, the Division had a German-made Link trainer which source heard cost two million zloty. New pilots were given twenty to thirty minute practice "flights" in this trainer, but most of the time it was out of order and no definite amount of time was allotted to its use.

When new pilots had successfully soloed after joining the Division, they were given instruction in instrument flight and spent a total of five hours flying in a hooded cockpit. When they finished this phase, they completed five hours of instrument flight in clouds. Then they spent a varying amount of time in night flying. This last phase included night navigation flights, night formation flying and night flight tactics.

In addition to the training described above, all pilots spent an average of 20 hours annually in night flying. Each pilot spent an average total of 10 hours per month in all types of flight.

Flights were scheduled during bad weather, but squadron commanders were reluctant to let pilots fly because they did not have confidence in the abilities of the pilots.

Formation flying was restricted to flight level, since there were no full squadrons in the Division. All normal formations were used, including line, column, echelon right and left and "v".

Navigators were trained in aerial photography, but no details of this training were known to source. When flights over the Baltic Sea were scheduled it was the duty of the squadron navigation officer to notify coastal observation stations of the time, place and altitude of the flight. If pilots became lost during such flights, they were instructed to fly directly to the coast and then along the coast until the field was sighted. If a pilot became lost while flying above land, he notified ground radio stations by saying "KASBEK". The radio station would then give him his position. No automatic direction finding system was used but "course indicators" had been installed in the TU-2 aircraft and some of the fighters. No training was given in either the ground controlled approach or instrument landing systems and the Division airfield was not equipped to use these systems.

[redacted] the Division had received no training in the following: Naval gunfire spotting, defense against atomic, biological or chemical attack, simulated carrier landings, actual practice in mining operation and torpedo attacks. However, lectures were given on the theory of mining operations and the construction and operation of mines and torpedoes. There were no combined operations with Soviet aircraft.

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Much of the advanced training of the units of the Division was given in conjunction with ships of the Polish Navy and consisted of defense of the coastal areas against simulated air and sea attacks. Training in anti-submarine warfare was given, but source knew of no submarine hunting system.

The bombers and dive bombers of the Division practiced bombing on the GRYP, a destroyer which had been sunk by the Germans in PUCK Bay. The average amount of hits on this target, which was approximately 85 m. by 12 m., was 30%. During the course of air to air gunnery practice, fighters and attack aircraft usually scored 50% hits on the sleeve. The gunners of the bombers achieved the same accuracy in air to air firing, but during

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ground to air gunnery practice got only one hit for each ten rounds fired. Air to air firing passes were made only from the flanks or at an oblique angle. Although there were aircraft rockets in the Division's magazine and personnel were given familiarization training, there was no practice firing with rockets.

close ground support operations at least one such operation in support of an amphibious landing had taken place. In this instance the Division supported a landing made by Polish Naval Infantry units.

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In classroom instruction, the following description was given of the role of the Naval Air Division in support of landing operations: Just prior to the landing, a photo-reconnaissance plane makes runs over the beaches to be assaulted in order to take last minute photographs of beach installations. Ships then bombard coastal installations for a fixed period of time, after which aircraft lay a smoke screen 100 m. from the beach. When the landing craft approach this smoke screen, attack aircraft bomb, rocket and strafe the beach. If the landing is still strongly opposed, landing craft pull back from the beach and aircraft strafe the shore line again. One officer from the Division is assigned to accompany the landing forces for close liaison between aircraft and troops. This officer also lands and can call by radio for support against enemy strong points. Front lines are indicated by the use of flares.

3. NORMAL OPERATING ALTITUDES: Normal operating altitudes during training and operations flights were as follows:

Utility and training planes - 300 m.

Attack planes and bombers - 600 m.

Fighters - 3,000 m.

4. AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY: The attack squadron of the Division usually kept eight of its ten aircraft in an available status and the bomber squadron had three of its six aircraft available daily. The main reason for the non-availability of aircraft was a local shortage of parts. Sometimes a request to a depot for replacement parts was not filled for several weeks. In the fighter squadrons, only six of fifteen aircraft were operable. Of the remaining nine, six had no motors and three had been grounded for lack of parts. The remainder of the Division's aircraft were kept available at all times.

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No new aircraft had been received since the formation of the 30th Air Regiment at STOLP.

5. PILOT RATING SYSTEM: Below are listed the qualifications for each of the three classes of pilots in the Polish Naval Air Division:

1st Class Pilot - Able to fly under the following minimum conditions:

Daytime: Ceiling - 100 m.
 Visibility - 2,000 m.
 Wind velocity - 12 m. per sec.

Night: Ceiling - 500 m.
 Visibility - 10 km.
 Wind velocity - 4 m. per sec.

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2nd Class Pilot : Daytime: Ceiling - 200 m.
Visibility - 4,000 m.
Wind velocity - 10 m. per sec.

Night: Same as 1st Class

3rd Class Pilot - Daytime: Ceiling - 500 m.
Visibility - 10 km.
Wind velocity - 8 m. per sec.

Night: Same as 1st Class

6. MISSION OF THE POLISH NAVAL AIR DIVISION: The mission of the Division was described as (1) the defense of its base against attacks from air or sea; (2) observation in the Baltic Sea area for enemy ships or aircraft; (3) attack on targets in the Baltic Sea in combined operations with ships of the Polish Navy. [redacted] 25X1
the training which was being carried on in the Division was preparing the Division for this mission.
7. ALERT STATUS: Two YAK-9-P fighters of the 34th Fighter Regiment were kept in an alert status every day, except Sundays and holidays, from sunrise to sunset. The 30th Air Regiment supplied two IL-10s and one TU-2 for duty on Sundays and holidays. Crews and mechanics remained near these planes at all times with live ammunition on board and bombs ready to load. [redacted] 25X1

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